

**Draft Meeting Summary
Humboldt/Del Norte MLPA Regional Working Group Meeting
January 16, 2003
Wharfinger Building, Eureka, CA.**

Working Group Members Present: Ken Bates, Jim Currie, Brandi Easter, Thomas Gates, Hal Genger, Dave Hankin, Kenyon Hensel, Charlie Notthoff, Jeff Robinson, Howard Sakai, Ted Souza, Mike Zamboni

Working Group Members Absent: Susan Golledge-Rotwein, Tom Leshner, Paul Pellegrini, Ken Vallotton

Department and MLPA Planning Team staff present: Neil Kalson, John Mello

RESOLVE Staff Present: Paul De Morgan

I. Welcome, Introduction, Proposed Meeting Objectives and Agenda

The meeting began with the Regional Working Group (RWG) Coordinator, John Mello of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), welcoming the members and observers. He then asked everyone to introduce themselves. Members of the public were also asked to introduce themselves. After the introductions, Mr. De Morgan, Senior Mediator with RESOLVE and the RWG facilitator, noted that Dr. DeMartini, a Master Team member and presenter on the agenda, and Ms. Susan McBride, a Sea Grant Advisor, were at the meeting and would be sitting at the table as advisors per the RWG discussion at the previous meeting. In addition, he noted that Sea Grant Advisors will be invited to all future MLPA meetings per the RWG recommendation.

Mr. De Morgan then reviewed the agenda and handouts distributed at the beginning of the meeting. He then reviewed the ground rules as established at the previous meeting.

Mr. De Morgan discussed the October RWG meeting summary. Given that this was the first summary, he spent some time confirming the review process with the RWG members. He noted that a copy was not included in the packet of documents because it had been sent out on November 6, 2002 and no comments were received. He indicated that since members were given an opportunity to comment, the assumption was that the draft was acceptable. He added that in the future, if substantive changes were made to a summary based on comments, a revised version would be sent out prior to the meeting. The group agreed that this process should be used for future summaries. Mr. De Morgan then asked the group if the draft summary was acceptable. The summary was accepted by the RWG and Mr. Mello indicated he would post the final summary on the MLPA website.

Mr. De Morgan then asked the RWG members and members of the public to briefly share any information or updates they felt other members of the group might be interested in. Ms. McBride announced that on January 22, Dr. Steve Ralston will lecture on the topic of scientific approaches to Marine Management. The lecture is to be held at the Department's Monterey office. Dr. Gates requested that a recent Stanford University study on marine reserves be made available to the group. Mr. Mello indicated he would get a copy of the presentation and the paper for the RWG. Mr. Robinson provided a website address to a NOAA recognized list serve regarding MPAs.

II. Department of Fish and Game Updates

Channel Islands MPA Network Decision

Mr. Mello then gave a presentation on the recent adoption by the Fish and Game Commission of a network of MPAs at the Santa Barbara Channel Islands, including an overview of the lengthy process, which led to the adoption of the MPAs. He noted that a lawsuit has been filed against the DFG Commission and the Department by a group of commercial and sport fishermen regarding the Channel Islands decision. Members raised concerns that the Channel Islands lawsuits may affect the MPA process. Mr. Mello reported that the full complaint against the Channel Islands MPA is on the Ventura County website and suggested that while there is no direct link between the Channel Islands process and the Humboldt/Del Norte process there are valuable lessons to be learned.

At the conclusion, a member requested a clear definition of cultural resources and reasons for that language in the mandate. Mr. Mello indicated he would look into the issue.

November 2002 Socioeconomic Workshop Overview

Next, Mr. Mello presented an overview of the first MLPA Socioeconomic Workshop held in Santa Cruz in November. Handouts were provided, including a complete meeting summary, text from Power Point presentations from two scientists, and some frequently asked questions. He then explained the purpose of the socio-economic meeting and reviewed the summary, while also addressing the importance of socio-economic factors in the MPA process.

Mr. Mello then asked for questions from the working group. Mr. Bates asked how researchers arrived at a dollar amount per interview. Mr. Mello reported that since this is an unfunded mandate, independent socio-economic studies may be impossible and the working group may be the primary source for socio-economic information. There was concern that in light of recent developments in the State budget, that the Department may be unable to finish the process. Mr. Mello responded that when the State comes out with a new budget he assumes the MLPA process will remain a high priority with the Dept.

Mr. Mello raised the issue of measuring the intrinsic value of MPAs. Members discussed the problems associated with determining intrinsic value. Dr. Hankin suggested having Steve Hackett, an HSU economist, present to the RWG. Ms. McBride advised the group that USFWS and NMFS both have natural resource economics departments that may be available to the RWG. A member suggested that the group address the problems associated with assigning value to MPAs again at a future meeting.

Mr. De Morgan summarized the discussion, noting that how and when socio-economic issues are addressed remains to be seen and that the issue holds great importance to the RWGs constituents. In closing, Mr. Mello indicated the DFG would be taking these comments, and others, into consideration as a decision on how to proceed is made.

III. Review, Refine, Finalize and Adopt RWG Operating Principles

The group then moved to a discussion of the revised operating principles. Mr. De Morgan reminded the RWG that while the goal of the session was to reach closure on the Operating Principles, they can be revisited as needed in the future. Before beginning to walk through the proposed changes section by section, some members raised concerns that not enough members were present to make decisions. After looking at the numbers, the group agreed they had a quorum and could make decisions.

Review of the Proposed Operating Principles began with Section V, Decision Making and Commitments. One member suggested that if not enough members are present, the meeting should be held but the group would refrain from making decisions. Another member suggested striking the language “on major products” and postponing major decisions if a group of RWG members with similar values is absent. There was concern that decisions made by the group not be subject to change by absent members. The group felt uncomfortable making decisions at meetings where a particular group is not present or not represented. Mr. De Morgan asked the group if they agreed to strike the words “on major products.” Ultimately, members agreed.

A member proposed striking all language in the first paragraph after the word “present” and changing the language “must provide comments” to “may provide comments.” Another member suggested placing major items on the agenda for the next meeting in cases when many members are absent. Mr. De Morgan advised that any decision made with out a particular group present will not carry the same weight as a decision by the full group. Members also questioned the protocol for resolving a tie. Mr. De Morgan suggested that in case of a tie, both opinions will carry equal support.

The group agreed to change the fifth line to “all decisions requiring a vote will be put in writing before the vote.” The group also added the language “decisions will be made by those present at the meeting.” The RWG also agreed to change “Asked to provide written comments” to “May provide written comments.”

After making the above changes to Section V the group accepted the section in principle, but asked a few members to work on specific language and present it after lunch and then moved on to Section I. [*Note: The language was presented after lunch and accepted for inclusion in the revised version of the document.*]

Section I. No changes or comments to this section.

Section II. There were minor changes to Section II. Ms. Easter asked for clarification of the word “existing.” Mr. Mello and Mr. De Morgan clarified the use of the word. Section II was accepted.

Section III. The group agreed to incorporate changes to the Attendance at Meetings section to clarify the role of alternates. There were no other changes to Section III.

Section IV. No changes or comments to this section.

Section V. See changes described above.

Section VI. No changes or comments to this section.

Section VII. No changes or comments to this section.

Section VIII. No changes or comments to this section.

At the end of the operating procedures conversation, the group discussed the need to define the number of absences to permit a RWG member before asking them to resign. Members suggested that after a certain number of absences in a row (for both the member and their alternate) the group should have a formal vote regarding whether to recommend dismissal or not. While three members preferred to indicate three absences were allowed, all other members were in favor of only allowing for only two absences prior to the vote occurring. Ultimately, the group agreed that for the time being, after missing two consecutive meetings, the group will consider recommending dismissal from the working group. It was noted that if a member were in this situation, he or she would be able to give their thoughts on why they and their alternates were unable to attend the meetings for the rest of the group to consider.

In conclusion, Mr. De Morgan agreed to make the changes and then send out a revised version for brief review before finalizing and posting to the DFG website.

IV. Public Comment Period

At the scheduled time for public comment, Mr. De Morgan asked if any members of the public wished to make a public comment. None of the members of the public present chose to make a comment so the meeting proceeded.

V. Begin Review and Discussion of Existing MPAs

GIS Presentation

Mr. De Morgan introduced Cynthia Rossi, from the Fort Bragg DFG office. Ms. Rossi then gave a presentation on GIS (Geographical Information Systems) technology as a tool available to the RWG. She began with a general introduction to GIS in ArcGIS 8.2 and then offered examples of the uses and capabilities of GIS technology including vector GIS, and raster GIS.

After some discussion, members asked Ms. Rossi to develop a list of the possible GIS layers available to the RWG and any other information that may be useful in order for them to better understand the ways GIS can be utilized in achieving their objectives. Mr. Robinson referred the group to a mapping website.

Mr. DeMartini suggested that the group consider reports made on Areas of Special Biological Significance a source of information. Ms. Rossi continued with her demonstration and with Mr. Mello illustrated the boundaries of existing MPAs in the Humboldt/Del Norte region and gave an

overview of current studies in Humboldt Bay. Members requested information regarding how the mapping technology may be used by members outside of meetings.

VI. Science Presentations: Getting to Know the Coast

Dr. Milton Boyd, Humboldt State University Department of Biological Sciences, began his presentation by discussing the Non Indigenous Species (NIS) Survey recently completed in Humboldt Bay. Dr. Boyd presented the sites of the study, sampling methods, number of introduced species, and methods of dispersal. He discussed how the invasive, non-native cordgrass, *Spartina densiflora*, a native of Chile, was once thought to be a native species unique to Humboldt Bay. He discussed how the introduction of non-native plants and animals is on the increase, and that many exotic plants and animals are transported here in the ballasts of ships. Dr. Boyd also gave an overview of the various marine habitats found in Humboldt Bay and the plants and animals found in these habitats. He pointed out the importance of the bay's eelgrass and mudflats to a vast array of marine animals.

Dr. John DeMartini, Humboldt State University Department of Biological Science, introduced ways to look at the variables involved in describing a habitat. Dr. DeMartini introduced survey techniques, and biogeographical differences between areas. He emphasized his "Black Box" concept, which addresses the problem of how little we know about the marine environment, especially the extent of rocky bottom habitats as one moves away from the coastline. Dr. DeMartini talked about the connections between life forms in the marine ecosystem and that many connections between species are not recognized without looking closely at the system. He also discussed why the turbid nearshore waters of the north coast were not favorable habitat for sea urchins and abalone and that population levels for these animals were low in Humboldt and Del Norte counties compared to Mendocino and Sonoma counties. Mr. De Morgan informed the group that members and advisors on the Master Plan Team were available upon request.

After Dr. DeMartini's presentation, group discussion turned to determining criteria for MPA placement. Members discussed enforcement, safety, productivity related to MPAs and whether to place a MPA in an area that has been fished or not. Mr. De Morgan repeated the initial goals of the MLPA to focus group discussion.

VI. Continue Review and Discussion of Existing MPAs

After the break Mr. De Morgan posed two questions to the group: 1) What additional information would the group like to have available; and 2) what do you propose to do to move forward.

In regards to the first question members requested: a list of species of concern, the Punta Gorda Reserve Report, ASBS reports, the creation of a bibliography, and bottom habitat maps including swath maps. Ms. McBride informed the group that Dr. Jeff Borgeld at HSU may have swath/bathymetry maps for this area. Mr. Mello informed the group that the Department is working on a map of currently closed areas. Members also requested Initial Draft Concept maps as a resource. The group also requested information on how the Channel Islands Marine Protected Area planning team made their decisions. Dr. Gates suggested that each member make

15-20 minute presentations on their priorities and goals for the MPA process. Mr. De Morgan then summarized the discussion and asked Mr. Mello to investigate the questions and requests posed by members.

Addressing the second question members suggested sharing values and interests and giving an account of individual expertise. Mr. Mello agreed to work with members who have no alternate in obtaining a suitable alternate.

VII. Next Step Tasks, Meeting Summary and Acknowledgements

To conclude the meeting Mr. De Morgan summarized the responses to the questions and listed next steps on the board. Mr. De Morgan then circulated a schedule and asked members to show when they are available for the next meeting. He and Mr. Mello thanked members for attending and adjourned the meeting.